

# LSA at UVA

## *Latinx Student Alliance at the University of Virginia*

In 2009, LSA branched off from La Alianza, a program under the Office of the Dean of Students, and established itself as a CIO with the hopes of becoming a more autonomous community. Since then, LSA has serviced the Latinx community by advocating and voicing the concerns of Latinx students at the University, fostering events that promote all interest and initiatives of the Hispanic/Latinx community, and creating a diverse and supportive network for Hispanic/Latinx students to thrive in.

I served on LSA's executive team this year as the First Year & Transfer Students Engagement Chair. Having just finished my first year, I had recently experienced what being a Latinx student at the University can be like when first getting to UVA. And now, as a second year, I am in this position wanting to not only aid and mend some of the potential struggles, but also to remind students that there is a strong and loving community ready to help. Coming into this year things were overwhelming, but I'm happy to see everything that I and others on the exec team have been able to accomplish.

We began the year with our annual LSA Ball, an event held at the beginning of every school year where we come together to celebrate all things Latinx at UVA. This year we were excited to use the proceeds from the ball towards a donation to the Charlottesville Immigrant Freedom Fund. This was only the beginning of the efforts LSA made to strengthen our connection with the larger Latinx community of Charlottesville this year. I was so proud to see as our community outreach chair work to set up events with local schools in the area to bring more resources to students of C'Ville. We were also able to use this year to continue past LSA initiatives. In 2018, LSA and Latinx students at the University produced the "Our University to Shape" proposal which listed and expanded on demands that the UVA Hispanic/Latinx community was seeking. Much work has been done since this proposal debut. This past year our LSA president along with other leaders of Latinx organizations worked on the translation of Student Financial Services documents, one of the big demands of the proposal.

The Latinx community at UVA is one that constantly inspires me due to its resilience and commitment to advocacy work. I have seen how the love of this community expands the bounds of just Grounds. This year, along with so many others, I was able to see so much of that hard work come to fruition. On February 6<sup>th</sup> of 2020, the Latinx Student Center (LSC), or "La Casita", held its welcome reception. LSA, along with all the other amazing Latinx orgs. have crafted a strong and loving community and now all of that has been beautifully poured into the LSC. LSA is proud of having taken part in that process and we are extremely excited to continue working on supporting and uplifting the Latinx community at our University and in Charlottesville.

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